An Evaluation on Intelligence-Policy Maker Relationship amidst Rising Terrorism in Horn of Africa Region

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Abstract: *The threat of terrorism in the Horn of Africa region is on the rise despite sustained international and regional military efforts. The Somalia-based terrorist group, Al-Shabaab, continues to perpetrate violent crimes in parts of Somalia and neighboring countries, particularly those contributing troops to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). This study examines the relationship between intelligence and policy-making in countering terrorism within the region. Through an analysis of relevant literature and interviews with key respondents, this article argues that the non-responsiveness of policymakers to strategic intelligence assessments is at the heart of explaining the continuity of the terrorism challenge in the region. The study recommends strengthening trust between the intelligence community and policymakers to enhance counter-terrorism efforts in the region. The purpose of this research is to shed light on the complex dynamics between intelligence and policy-making in the Horn of Africa's fight against terrorism. By exploring the multifaceted factors contributing to the rise of Al-Shabaab activities, the study aims to discern the critical role played by intelligence assessments in shaping effective counter-terrorism strategies. It delves into the challenges faced in integrating intelligence insights into policy decisions, ultimately affecting the region's security landscape. Furthermore, this article examines the implications of the existing gaps in the intelligence-policy maker relationship and highlights the urgent need for collaboration, transparency, and effective information-sharing mechanisms to address the terrorism menace effectively.Based on the findings, this study advocates for a comprehensive approach that fosters greater trust and cooperation between the intelligence community and policymakers. By enhancing responsiveness to strategic intelligence assessments, policymakers can make informed and timely decisions that bolster counter-terrorism efforts in the Horn of Africa. The paper concludes that a more robust and cohesive intelligence-policy maker relationship is essential for devising evidence-based counter-terrorism strategies and safeguarding the lives and livelihoods of civilians in the region. As the threat of terrorism continues to evolve, embracing a culture of information sharing and collaboration will be instrumental in securing lasting peace, stability, and prosperity for the Horn of Africa.*

Keywords: *Intelligence-Policy maker, Policy maker relationship Intelligence evaluation, Policymaker, rising terrorism, Horn of Africa terrorism, Intelligence-Policy*

INTRODUCTION

Intelligence in theory andpracticevaries across many cultures. In the Horn of Africa region, intelligence has its own jargon. It is largely, associated with secrecy or even the secret police. In Ethiopia,for instance, intelligenceis associated with community policing or the 'hybridity in policing'.That is, the local community is responsible for information gathering and dissemination in a quasi-state institutionalized system referred to as, *Kebele* system.This system has managed to enhance security and justice in most parts of Ethiopia (Baker, 2013). On the other hand, intelligence concept in Somaliaextends beyond state-centrismand even the 'hybridity in policing'concept. In fact, activities of non-state group-Al-Shabaab,dominates the discourse on intelligence. Al-Shabaab's intelligence wing, *Amniyaat,* dominate the discourse on intelligencepossibly due to its precision and sophisticated manner(Sinko&Besenyo, 2021).The intelligenceas a concept as understood in the Horn of Africa region, therefore varies in context and spatial dimensions. It revolves around activities of state and non-state actors or even both, as illustrated.

Sherman Kent, a towering scholar in the intelligence studies discipline, posits that intelligence is knowledge. It is processed information that goes through the stages described in the intelligence cycle. The stagesare; planning and direction, collection, processing, analysis and dissemination (Kent, 1949). Intelligence also means the institution or organization responsible with safeguarding the state from threats emanating from within and without.Intelligenceherein would refer to the intelligence agencies found in the Horn of Africa. These are the; National Intelligence Security Service (NISS) of Ethiopia;National Intelligence and Security Services (NISA) ofSomalia; General Intelligence Service (GIS) of Sudan;Djibouti'sDocumentation and Security Service (SDS); and National Security Office (NSO) of Eritrea.

Moreover, intelligence means covert actions undertaken by an intelligence outfit. The secret activitiesare carried out by a respective state so as to influence the political, economic or military conditions of another country abroad. The guidingprinciplefor such actions is *plausible deniability*. It means that;incase an intelligence officer or a representative of a country is caught or intercepted while engaged in clandestine activities in a host nation, then oneshould always deny culpability (Andregg, 2010).

A closer illustration on the application of the plausible deniability principle is that; in September 2021, Fahad Yasin, the former head of NISA was arrested and detained in Djibouti while attempting to return to Somalia. On its part, the Djibouti Government denied accusations that it had detained a Turkish airlines carrying the top Somalia Security official, even as Somalia claimed that Yasin had been illegally detained(Mutambo, 2021)

The 'need to know' is another guiding principle applied by the intelligence outfits found in the Horn of Africa. The 'need to know' means that sensitive information is made available only to persons with the right clearance. It allows the value of intelligence to increase. It also allows the intelligence to be shared with consumers who need it thereby lessening the risk that intelligence will be compromised. Secrecy therefore is the utmost creed (Kitur, 2013.

However, the 'need to know' principle is in a state of flux. It is giving way to the norm of 'responsibility to provide. The norm is based on a belief that compartmentalization of information affects the desired outcome. More so, the evolving and complex nature of threats in the post-cold war environment provides impetus for cooperation and information sharing on intelligence matters. In USA, for example, effective security management is founded on intelligence sharing and cooperation amongst the seventeen (17) intelligence units. The intelligence units are coordinated by the Office of Directorate of National Intelligence (Johnson, 2010).

Like in USA, intelligence cooperation frameworks are gradually being embraced in non-Western democracies like Kenya. The multi-agency framework for combatting terrorism in the country is founded on the principle of responsibility to share information. These frameworks are, manifest through established centers like; National Counter-terrorism Center (NCTC) and Joint Counter-Terrorism Analysis Center (JCTAC). In both illustrations, officers drawn from either, the National Intelligence Service, Kenya Defense Force, Immigration Services, Kenya Revenue Authority, Correctional services, Directorate of Public Prosecutions among other state agencies work closely to deter, disrupt and defeat terrorist elements (Kitur, 2013).

Intelligenceis still considered a 'taboo' for most African countries, notwithstanding the shifting approaches and philosophies on intelligence management(Pateman, 1992).This is largely because intelligence agencies in Africa still function as personal fiefdoms. They rarely reveal details about their size, operations and funds.They are not accountable to senior politicians, civil servants as well as the Head of State who may not know what is going on in the intelligence agency. In most instances, the Intelligence assets are also deployed against domestic critics and are oriented exclusively towards domestic control.

Further, political expediency is attained through politicization of intelligence agencies. The politicization for domestic control involves corrupting the intelligence analysts to produce intelligence products that please politicians or policymakers. The importis that, intelligence analysts must-know the policy maker's frame of mind and strategy(Pillar, 2010). Within the parlance of Intelligence Communities in the Horn of Africa, it is refereed to 'knowing your customer'.It means that an intelligence analyst is required to be responsive to the needs of the policy maker.

Introspectively, the literature on intelligence is yet to be accepted as valid even within the academic circles. Theinformation and documents held by the intelligence community are still classified and are not available to those who do not have security clearance. This is a limitation that the author had to bear with during the course of investigation.

In light of the rising threat of terrorism in the Horn of Africa region, this article delves into the interplay between intelligence and policy-making, specifically in relation to countering terrorism and the activities of Al-Shabaab. The article aims to explore the diverse intelligence practices present in the region, involving both state and non-state actors, and examine the challenges faced in effectively utilizing intelligence to inform policy decisions. Furthermore, the study seeks to shed light on the importance of intelligence in safeguarding states from internal and external

threats, emphasizing principles like plausible deniability and the 'need to know' in intelligence operations.

Additionally, the research delves into the complexities surrounding the intelligence-policy maker relationship and investigates challenges such as limited transparency, politicization of intelligence, and compartmentalization of information. Through an analytical lens, the study endeavors to provide a deeper understanding of how these challenges can impede collaboration and effective information-sharing among intelligence agencies and policymakers. Ultimately, the article aims to offer valuable insights and recommendations to strengthen intelligence cooperation, enhance regional security efforts, and foster more informed and robust counter-terrorism strategies in the Horn of Africa.

Policy-Making and Intelligence

Policy making, on the other hand, is a province ofelected politicians and their representatives.It is not a monolithic or a unitary entity. Each policy maker, be it at executive, parliamentary or judicial level, has a lone primary goal. That goal is to gain, maintain and expand power. Achieving these goals may require the sacrificing of values such as truth, prudence, national ideals and other values which are taken to be sacrosanct. Therefore, policy and the process of creating it, is what a government chooses to do and what not to do (Dye, 1972).

For most Western democracies, democratization of policy making is considered an ideal. It is an all-inclusive enterprise that encompass many actors who are located in the public and private spheres. The agencies compete to influence policy and the policy maker. The maxim 'where you stand depends on where you sit,' in bureaucratic politics exemplifies this kind of relationship(Allison &Zelikow, 1999).Contrastingly, policy making in non-democratic regimes is characterized by singularity or monism. It is largely a purview of the executive arm or the president who determines what should be prioritized and implemented. Only on a few circumstances that an all-inclusive inter-agency approach in policy-making becomes clear.

The relationship between policy-making and intelligence is not of equals. Intelligence agencies produce what policy-maker consumes. That is, intelligence outfits are there to serve policy. It is a practice that dates to history. In ancient Mauryan Empire of India, for example, Kautilya, a classical strategic thinker observes that, intelligence spies are critical for securing and defending the state(Niaz, 2008). Sun Tzu, a classical Chinese military strategist also mentions in the *Art of war* that, fore-knowledge or intelligence and state wellbeing is intertwined. In contemporary literature, the efficacy of intelligence in statecraft is also affirmed.Without intelligence the survival and wellbeing of the state cannot be guaranteed.

Intelligence agencies therefore have to exist as part of the larger apparatus that works for policy-makers. They protect the ruling regime, consolidate power and safeguard national security. There is no other meaningful function beyond this relationship. On its part, governments are run by and for policy-makers, the most senior of whom govern by virtue of having won an election which gives them the right to appoint senior officials including those that serve in the intelligence structures.

It is due to this asymmetrical relationship that policy makers fail to listen to good intelligence. They tend to have prejudicial assumptions about those providing it. They also fear that the intelligence they receive is designed to fix their thinking including demonstrating that they are wrong. Further, policy makers hold firm beliefs whichamong them is that; intelligence community tend to overlookevidence that is contrary. Policy makers also believe that the assessment of issues by intelligence agencies is poor and as such, have the prerogative to look for intelligence (Pillar, 2010). This has led to some scholars to question the capacity of policy makersto consume the intelligence.

According to (Munene, 2022) most policy-makers or decision makerslack requisite endowment to synthesize the generated intelligence and therefore ought to be inducted to intelligence products to avoid possible fall-out with the society. On same breath, the competence of intelligence officersshould be re-evaluated to prevent creeping inertia and political commotion. Therefore, the quality and competence of the producer and consumer of intelligence must complement one another. The failure to focus on the inefficiency of the intelligence architecture as well as on the consumers of intelligence is to blame for the security lapse. How does this problem that is located either at the intelligence or the policy making level affected the society in the Horn of Africa? Should there be concern on the relationship between the intelligence and policy-making in the region?

Theories are there to explain, describe and forecast phenomena including the relationship between intelligence and policy-maker. One of this theory is subversion-paradox theory. The theory propelled by Faini, (2020) posits that, intelligence agencies provide vital information for national security but the secrets they possess can also be used against their own masters. They can be used to sabotage the consumers of intelligence. Likewise, the theory posits that consumers of intelligence may have a concealed mission to bring intelligence agencies to big disrepute. The relationship between intelligence and policy-maker is therefore characterized by mistrust, suspicion and uncertainty. How these relational aspects that characterize intelligence agencies and policymakers pan out within the terrorism discourse in the Horn of Africa region is a subject that this study was interested in investigating.

INTELLIGENCE-POLICY MAKER RELATIONSHIP IN THE CONTEXT OF COUNTER-TERRORISM EFFORTS IN HORN OF AFRICA

Countering terrorism is a challenge in the Horn of Africa. A report by UNDP titled, *Journey to Extremism in Africa: Pathways to Recruitment and Disengagement,*shows that terrorist elements areexploiting instability and conflict to intensify attacks amidst a wide scale offensive by regional and international military forcesIn particular, Al-Shabaab remains the deadliest terrorist group in Somalia responsible for 534 deaths or 89 percent of all terror related deaths in the country in 2021.The terror outfit has also developed a cross-border military strategy initiating insurgencies across six countries in the Horn of Africa and carrying out attacks in five of them(Kambela, 2020). Consequently, many civilians continue to suffer from the broader impact of terrorism on their lives and livelihoods.

A myriad of responses exist at the international, continental, regional and national levels, to counter the threat of Al-Shabaab. These responses are dependent on the nature of relationship

that exist between the prime decision makers and intelligence. At the international level, for instance, the United Nations through its organ -theUnited Nations Security Council (UNSC) provides a global response for containing the Al-Shabaabthreat.UNSC has released several resolutions targeted against the terrorist group. In UNSC resolution 1844 (2008), Al-Shabaabis listed as a terrorist group that engages in acts that directly or indirectly threaten the peace, security or stability in Somalia. The success of suchUN responses, however, largely dependon the relationship between UNSC and the Counter-terrorism Executive Committee fondly known as CTED. CTED is an extension of UNSC. It iscomposed of serving and former security intelligence officers drawn from across the world. The role of the office is to proactively provide strategic intelligence to UNSC. Strategic intelligence, therefore, underwrites activities of UNSC whose bearing on counter-terrorism strategies in Somalia is notable (UNSC 2008).

Notable achievements of CTED in Somalia include; identification and listing of individuals, groups, undertakings and entities included on the 1844 UNSC sanction list. CTEDalso conducts country visits to Somalia on behalf of UNSC. The objective is to assess its commitment to counter-terrorism efforts. It also identifies terrorism trends in Somalia. Therecent ones are; the flagging out of Al-Shabaab in financing of terrorism using charcoal and acquisition of improvised explosive Device (IED) making materials

Strategic responses exist also at the continental level. The African Union (AU)provides thevital leadership in policy matters on terrorism. Thisis attained through issuance of policy statements and directives aimed at combatting the threat of terrorism. Some of the policy directives are the *Silencing the guns*, a flagship initiative of the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063. The initiative aims to end all wars, conflict and gender-based violence and to prevent genocide. Other AU flagship projects aimed at addressing transnational terrorism and applicable to Horn of Africa are; Organization for African Unity (OAU) Convention for Elimination of Mercenaries in Africa adopted in 1977 and OAU Convention on prevention of and combatting of terrorism adopted in 1999. The 2002, AU plan of Action of Preventing and Combatting terrorism also sought to strengthen the commitments and obligations of the member states in preventing terrorism(Ewi& Aning, 2006).

Being the consumers of intelligence, the AU Peace and Security Council (APSC) relies on the strategic intelligence from CISSA. CISSA' headquarter is in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Its key mandate is to coordinate intelligence as well as promote cooperation, confidence building measures and capacity building among the intelligence and security services of Africa. The membership of CISSA is open to all intelligence and security services of African countries. Currently, fifty one (51) intelligence and security services are signatories to the CISSA constitutive memorandum of understanding and are thus members of CISSA.Therefore, all intelligence agencies and security services of the six countries forming the Horn of Africa region are members of CISSA (Hutton, 2016).

Perceptions differ regarding the effectiveness of CISSA on terrorism. It is cited that the regional intelligence body works at cross purposes with the African Union Peace and Security Council (APSC). There is weak synergy and coordination of intelligence leading to conflicting responses

on the fight against terrorism at the continental level. The ineffectiveness of the African Union to combat transnational terrorism therefore, is a matter of policy failure owing to poor implementation of established protocols for peace and stability across the African continent(Usman &Aghalino, 2021).

The African Center for the Study ad Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) located in Algeria is another platform that feeds to the AU peace and security machinery.The institution prides itself as a center of excellence in research matters concerning prevention and combatting terrorism in Africa. As a structure of the African Union Commission, the Center contributes to and strengthens the capacity of African Union to deal with issues relating to prevention and combatting terrorism in Africa with the ultimate objective of eliminating the threats posed by terrorism to peace, security, stability and development.

Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) engagement on intelligence matters is not as active as AU. This is attributed to its historical origin. IGAD was formed in1996 to supersede its predecessor the; Inter-governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD). The aim of IGADD was to address the recurring severe droughts and other natural disasters. It is this association with ecological and not peace and security matters that explains the lackluster performance on the part of intelligence producers and consumers who are located in IGAD region. (Wulf&Debiel, 2009)

Strategic initiativesof IGAD in the region exist. The *Somalia Frontline States Summit on regional efforts towards stabilization of Somalia and eradication of terrorism* is the most recent. During the summit held on 01 February, 2023, Kenya, Somalia Djibouti and Ethiopia agreed to join forces to restore peace and stability in Al-Shabaab prone areas of Somalia(Tekle, 2022.). Another milestone is the IGAD Regional strategy for preventing and countering violent extremism formulated in the year 2016. The framework aims to enhance the soft power capabilities, coordination and partnerships to prevent and counter violent extremism. Further, the IGAD roadmap to deny Al-Shabaab access to weapons is a strategic initiative that bears a resemblance to AU Agenda 2063 to *Silence the guns* in Africa. The strategic initiative came to being in 2019.

Country Level Assessment on Intelligence-policy maker relationship

Intelligence-policy maker relationship is determined by the degree of politicization in respective intelligence agencies in Horn of Africa region. The higher the degree of politicization, the better the intelligence-policy maker relationship with spiraling effects on the counter-terrorism efforts. This is quite striking in Ethiopia where politicization is rife while terrorism incidences remains low. The politicization in the country's intelligence is manifest in the direct appointment of Director General of NISS by the Prime-Minister. Unlike other Ministerial Heads, the Director General of NISS is directly appointed by the Prime Minister who also plays the role of supervising the overall function of the intelligence organization. Additionally, Article 30 of the Anti-terrorism Proclamation bestows Ethiopia's intelligence agency a leadership role in coordination of all affairs on terrorism. All other organs of law enforcement therefore become

subordinate bodies to NISS in the task of preventing and countering terrorism. This closely knit relationship between the Prime Minister and intelligence agency on terrorism matters therefore has a bearing on the number of reduced attacks in the country(Mesfin, 2010)

Contrastingly, a lukewarm relationship between the intelligence and the policymaker engenders insecurity. It leads to a security vacuum which allows terrorists elements to exploit. In Somalia, for instance, the intelligence agency-NISA lacks cordial connection with the prime decision makers. These prime decision makers are, Office of Presidency, National Parliament and the executive positions. NISA and organs in the Federal Government of Somalia are always competing for political control. The intense inter-agency competition creates non-responsiveness by the consumers of intelligence. This precipitates state agencies to withhold information and refrain to cooperate in information sharing(Staff reporter, 2020).

Theclan-based system ingrained in Somalia's national psychealso exacerbates the fragile relationship between NISA and the prime decision makers.Somaliais comprised of clans and sub-clans that compete for political dominance in Somalia. The clan-based system creates a false consciousness that each respective clan considers it necessary to protectand advance by all means. Such ceaselessinter clan competition is at the center of NISA and Somalia Military Army (SNA) thus affecting the counter-terrorism operations in Somalia.Somalia's media outlet,*Garowe on-line*, reported in July 2020 that police officers attached to the NISA clashed with SNA at Dhusamareb in Galmadug state. The infighting within the government troops gave Al-Shabaab an opportunity to seize control of government held regions(Staff reporter, 2020).

Furthermore, the distant relationship between policy-maker and intelligence agency is epitomized in Djibouti's case. The intelligence agency in Djibouti, *Documentation and Security Service (SDS),* is heavily dependent on external (foreign) patrons than the domestic polity. Consequently, such security overlays in Djibouti complicates the security dynamics in the country making the threats including terrorism more complex and complicated. Specifically, the competition by the extra-regional actors to influence SDS makes the agency less efficient and effective in draining the pool for terrorism facilitation and recruitment in Djibouti (Adeto, 2019).

A major reason for over-reliance by Djibouti's intelligence agency on foreign patrons is because of the numerous foreign military installations in Djibouti. Historically, the French have maintained a military base in Djibouti. United States of America has also opened a military base in Djibouti for operations on its war against terrorism particularly those Al-Qaeda targets in Yemen and Somalia. China on its part opened a military base adjacent to Doraleh multi-purpose port in 2017 largely because it wants to solidify its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Other countries with keen interest along the Coast of Djibouti and Somalia are; Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Japan, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Germany and Italy(Adeto, 2019).

In sum, intelligence and policymaking and how the two concepts correlate influence on counter-terrorism in the Horn of Africa region. The politicization of intelligence services results in an eased containment of insecurity. Likewise, non-responsiveness of the policy-maker to intelligence organizations generates a security vacuum that ends up being occupied by terrorists

and criminal elements. Other aspects like unaccountability of NISA to prime-decision makers as in Somalia and the excessive foreign patronage in Djibouti also influences the counter terrorism responses in the respective countries.

What needs to happen is for enhanced trust between intelligence and policy-makers. The idea is to have the intelligence agency and policy-maker talking to each other and not past each other. Quite often blame games become common whenever, terrorist incidents occur. Strategic Intelligence analysts cite that the terrorist occurrences are due to a failure in policy and not failure of intelligence. The analysts point out that the strategic warnings were provided in good time to policy makers but the policy-makers fail to act on the intelligence. Likewise the policy-makeraccuse theintelligence organizations forfailing to detect terrorism early enough and if they do, the warnings are not specific. They are not categorical on the place, type or even the likely perpetrators of the terrorist attacks. Therefore like the principles of 'need to know,' 'knowing your customer' and 'plausible deniability' which are supreme intelligence agencies, there is need to embrace others such as enhanced confidence-building measures and trust. Their adoption influences political outcomes including those efforts that are geared towards curbing terrorism.

CONCLUSION

This study embarked on a thorough and comprehensive investigation into the intricate intelligence-policy maker relationship in countering terrorism within the Horn of Africa region, with a particular emphasis on the activities of the formidable terrorist organization, Al-Shabaab. Through meticulous inquiry, the diverse range of intelligence practices, involving both state and non-state actors, came to light, underscoring the intricacies inherent in addressing the ever-evolving security challenges faced by the region. By rigorously analyzing intelligence principles such as plausible deniability and the 'need to know,' this study underscores the pivotal and indispensable role played by intelligence agencies in safeguarding states from internal and external threats.

The thorough analysis of the region's counter-terrorism efforts has brought to the forefront the challenges posed by limited transparency, politicization of intelligence, and compartmentalization of information. These obstacles have profound implications, impeding effective collaboration and information-sharing among intelligence agencies and policy-makers. The ramifications of these challenges extend to the quality and efficacy of informed decision-making in the relentless pursuit of counter-terrorism strategies. Thus, it becomes patently evident that intelligence serves as a pivotal and indispensable component in the unyielding fight against terrorism, necessitating the need to surmount these barriers and foster a robust atmosphere of cooperation to enhance regional security efforts. At this critical juncture, the Horn of Africa region demands a fortified and cohesive effort, wherein intelligence agencies and policymakers unite in their resolve to confront the mounting threat posed by Al-Shabaab and other terrorist entities. Fortifying the intelligence-policy maker relationship is of paramount significance to develop a unified, proactive, and data-driven approach in countering terrorism effectively. By fostering transparency and accountability in intelligence practices, agencies can cultivate trust with policymakers, ensuring that timely and accurate information reaches decision-makers. Embracing the 'responsibility to provide' norm, intelligence entities can proactively engage in

sharing vital intelligence, thereby fostering a collective understanding of the threat landscape and facilitating the formulation of comprehensive strategies accordingly.

Moreover, academic engagement and knowledge-sharing between intelligence agencies and scholarly circles will invigorate evidence-based policymaking. This symbiosis can generate novel insights into counter-terrorism efforts, yielding more effective and targeted responses. Addressing political interference within intelligence processes is imperative to preserve the objectivity and integrity of intelligence assessments, thereby ensuring that decisions are founded on credible analysis rather than expediency. Furthermore, regional cooperation mechanisms must be fortified to effectively combat the transnational nature of terrorism. Regular intelligence-sharing meetings, joint training exercises, and coordinated operations among intelligence agencies from different nations will bolster regional collaboration, leading to a more formidable and unified front against terrorist threats. Through collective endeavors, the Horn of Africa region can harness the full potential of intelligence to counter terrorism, safeguard civilian lives, and foster enduring peace and stability.

Therefore, this study serves as a valuable scholarly reference for comprehending the multifaceted dimensions of the intelligence-policy maker relationship within the Horn of Africa's counter-terrorism landscape. By recognizing the critical role intelligence plays in shaping counter-terrorism strategies and acknowledging the impediments to cooperation, this study has laid the foundation for concrete and actionable recommendations. Empowering intelligence agencies to operate transparently, fostering academic collaboration, and enhancing regional cooperation will pave the way for a more secure and resilient Horn of Africa region. In the face of ever-evolving terrorist threats, unwavering commitment to intelligence reform, collaboration, and evidence-based policy-making stands as the cornerstone in steering the region towards enduring peace, prosperity, and security...

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following detailed recommendations are proposed to strengthen the intelligence-policy maker relationship and improve counter-terrorism efforts in the Horn of Africa region:

Enhance Transparency and Accountability: Governments in the region should prioritize transparency and accountability within their intelligence agencies. Initiatives to promote openness about agency size, operations, and funding should be instituted, and mechanisms for oversight by senior politicians and civil servants should be established. Transparency measures will foster trust and confidence in intelligence agencies, contributing to more effective counter-terrorism strategies. Additionally, an annual public report on the intelligence community's activities can enhance transparency and inform citizens about the agencies' contributions to national security.

Embrace Intelligence Sharing and Collaboration: The 'responsibility to provide' norm should be widely embraced among intelligence agencies. Governments must encourage and facilitate information-sharing and cooperation between agencies. The establishment of joint centers, modeled after successful examples like the National Counter-terrorism Center (NCTC) and Joint Counter-Terrorism Analysis Center (JCTAC), should be pursued to enhance collaboration and information exchange among various state agencies involved in counter-terrorism efforts.

Furthermore, the creation of regional intelligence-sharing platforms and forums can foster real-time communication and data sharing, enabling a coordinated response to emerging threats.

Promote Academic Engagement and Knowledge Sharing: Governments and intelligence agencies should actively seek to engage with academia. By sharing classified information with scholars possessing appropriate security clearances, a more robust understanding of intelligence practices can be fostered. This collaboration will contribute to the development of evidence-based and effective policies and strategies in countering terrorism. Furthermore, establishing research partnerships between intelligence agencies and academic institutions can encourage data and goal driven policy development and contribute to the growth of intelligence studies as a respected academic discipline within the region.

Address Political Interference: To ensure the objectivity of intelligence analysis, governments must safeguard intelligence agencies from undue political interference. Agencies should be shielded from partisan influence, and their role in providing objective and unbiased assessments must be prioritized. Policymakers should heed intelligence recommendations based on credible analysis and not allow intelligence assessments to be manipulated for political gain. Implementing comprehensive codes of conduct for intelligence officers and policymakers can serve as a safeguard against politicization and maintain the integrity of intelligence assessments.

Strengthen Regional Cooperation Mechanisms: Governments within the Horn of Africa region should enhance regional cooperation frameworks to address cross-border security challenges posed by terrorism. Regular intelligence-sharing meetings, joint training exercises, and coordinated operations should be facilitated among regional intelligence agencies. This collective approach will foster a unified response to the common threat posed by groups like Al-Shabaab. Additionally, establishing a regional intelligence liaison office that fosters constant communication and collaboration between intelligence agencies can enhance information flow and bolster joint operations in countering terrorism.

Moving forward, the Horn of Africa region must adopt a comprehensive and coordinated approach to counter-terrorism that recognizes the unique intelligence dynamics at play. Emphasis should be placed on fostering an intelligence-policy maker relationship founded on trust, transparency, and collaboration. Addressing the 'so what' of this study necessitates concrete actions to bridge the gaps between intelligence assessments and policy-making decisions.

By implementing the proposed recommendations, the Horn of Africa region can bolster its collective efforts in countering terrorism and curbing the influence of groups like Al-Shabaab. An informed and cooperative approach to intelligence will enhance regional security, safeguard civilian lives, and contribute to the broader stability and development of the Horn of Africa. The challenge ahead lies in translating the insights of this study into practical policies and actions that promote a safer and more secure region for all. As regional dynamics continue to evolve, ongoing commitment to intelligence reform and collaboration will be crucial in sustaining progress in countering terrorism and fostering peace and stability within the Horn of Africa. The journey towards a more secure and resilient region requires the collective efforts of governments, intelligence agencies, academia, and international partners to confront terrorism's root causes and effectively mitigate the threats it poses. By strengthening intelligence capacities, enhancing

regional cooperation, and fostering evidence-based policy-making, the Horn of Africa can forge a united front against terrorism, ensuring the safety and well-being of its citizens and contributing to regional and global security.

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